

**A SECURE NETWORK-BASED SYSTEM FOR THE
DISTRIBUTED PRINTING OF DOCUMENTS**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An Internet-based printing system allows for the distribution and printing of documents and images in a secure, controlled manner. The system includes a secure printer that receives, decrypts and prints documents
5 supplied by a document server. Security of the system is realized by an aggregate of a secure communication protocol, smart card technology and the computational infeasibility of breaking a public key cryptographic system. The system may be used for electronic commerce, in which copies are made on a "pay-per-print" basis.